

**Ian M. Whalen**  
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## **EDUCATION**

- M.A.** Sociology, University of Mississippi, May 2017  
Thesis: “Discreet Only: An Exploration of Discreet Practices on Grindr in a Mississippi Town.”  
Committee: Amy McDowell (Chair), Kirsten Dellinger, and Minjoo Oh
- B.A.** History, University of Mississippi, 2015 (minor in Sociology)

## **AREAS OF RESEARCH INTEREST**

Men & Masculinities, Gender, LGBTQ Studies, Virtual Research Methods, Qualitative Research Methods

## **THESIS: “Discreet Only: An Exploration of Discreet Practices on Grindr in a Mississippi Town.”**

Abstract: This research, drawing from a content analysis of 420 Grindr profiles and 13 in-depth qualitative interviews with out, gay and bisexual men, examines discreet practices and how out gay and bisexual men navigate them on Grindr, a smartphone-dating app. I define discreet practices as the visual and linguistic patterns cultivated on Grindr through interaction and profile construction that reproduce the closet. The content analysis revealed specific visual and linguistic patterns that helped users assert their legitimacy as discreet. Visual practices of discreet follow three distinct patterns: the use of a blank, shirtless, and clothed headless torso profile, all of which bolster a sense of confidentiality. The latter two profiles communicate maleness directly through the emphasis placed on the male body, while the blank profile does not. To compensate for a lack of visual proof of maleness, blank profiles employ the use of specific language that evokes typically masculine coded activities and speech, like hunting and using the words “dude” and “buddy.” Interviewees discussed how they have learned to navigate and strategically deploy discreet practices on Grindr in order to compensate for their non-discreet presentation (i.e. the use of a face picture, use of feminize language). When Grindr users “do discreet” they are participating in practices that stabilize hetero-masculine performances in a queer space. These practices also reify stereotypical masculine tropes that perpetuate gender and sexual oppression by discursively defining the parameters of acceptable gender expression.

## **WORKS IN PROGRESS**

- In Progress.* Whalen, Ian M. “The Simultaneity of Sexual Fields: Grindr Use in a Mississippi Town.”
- In Progress.* Whalen, Ian M. “Doin’ Discreet Down South: An Examination of Discreet Practices on Grindr in Mississippi.”

## **PRESENTATIONS**

- 2020 Whalen, Ian M. "The Simultaneity of Sexual Fields: Grindr Use in a Mississippi Town." Roundtable. American Sociological Association Annual Meeting. San Francisco, CA. Presented Virtually.
- 2019 Whalen, Ian M. "Exploring Discreet Practices on Grindr." University of Colorado, Boulder. Boulder, CO. Invited Lecture.
- 2019 Whalen, Ian M. "I am too Fat to be an Otter, But Not Fat Enough to be a Bear': The Negotiation of Desirable Bodies on Grindr." Roundtable. Sociologists for Women in Society Annual Winter Meeting. Denver, CO.
- 2018 Whalen, Ian M. "Qualitative Inquiry: How to Conduct a Successful Interview." University of Colorado, Boulder. November 5. Invited Lecture.
- 2018 Whalen, Ian M. "'Discreet Only': An Exploration of Discreet Practices on Grindr in a Mississippi Town." Roundtable. American Sociological Association Annual Meeting. Philadelphia, PA.
- 2017 Whalen, Ian M. "Exploring Discreet Practices on Grindr and the Queering of Heterosexuality." Wake Forest University. October 27. Invited Lecture, via Skype.
- 2017 Whalen, Ian M. "'Discreet is so Annoying': Grindr, Discretion and Navigating the Closet in a Mississippi College Town." Session Paper Presentation. Southern Sociological Society Annual Meeting. Greenville, SC.
- 2016 Whalen, Ian M. "Grindr and the Construction of Virtual Masculinities." Session Paper Presentation. Alabama- Mississippi Sociological Association Annual Meeting. Jackson, MS.
- 2016 Whalen, Ian M. "Inclusive Masculinity Theory: A Critical Evaluation." Session Paper Presentation. Sarah Isom Center for Women and Gender Studies Student Conference. Oxford, MS.

## **RESEARCH EXPERIENCE**

- Fall 2020 Graduate Research Assistant. Institute of Behavioral Science. University of Colorado Boulder. "Health Lifestyles Project." PI: Dr. Stefanie Mollborn.
- Spring 2020-Fall 2020 Graduate Research Assistant. Department of Sociology. University of Colorado Boulder. "Gendered Experiences of the Coronavirus Pandemic." PI: Dr. Rachel Rinaldo.
- Spring 2018 Graduate Research Assistant. Institute of Behavioral Science. University of Colorado Boulder. "Denver Study of the Built and Social Environment (DBASE). PI: Dr. Jason Boardman.
- Fall 2016 Graduate Research Assistant. Department of Sociology and Anthropology. University of Mississippi. Performed content analysis

of primary data for the “Race Diary Project,”  
PIs: Dr. Willa Johnson, Dr. Kirk Johnson, and Dr. James Thomas.

Publications: Johnson, Kirk A., Willa M. Johnson, James M. Thomas, and John J. Green. 2019. “Mapping Microaggressions on a Southern University Campus: Where Are the Safe Spaces for Vulnerable Students?” *Social Problems* 0(0): 1-17. doi: 10.1093/socpro/spz055.

Summer 2016-Fall 2017

Graduate Research Assistant. Department of Sociology and Anthropology. University of Mississippi. Collected and analyzed primary data for “An Ethnographic Case Study of Organizational Culture, Diversity, & Inequality in Higher Ed.,”  
PI: Dr. James Thomas.

Publications: Thomas, James M. 2020. *Diversity Regimes: Why Talk is Not Enough to Fix Racial Inequality at Universities*. New Brunswick, Camden, and Newark, NJ and London, UK. Rutgers University Press.

Thomas, James M. 2017. “Diversity Regimes and Racial Inequality: A Case Study of Diversity University.” *Social Currents* 5(2) 140-156.

**TEACHING EXPERINCE (Graduate Part-Time Instructor)**

Fall 2020 Sex, Gender, and Society (SOCY/WGST 1016)—Remotely taught.

Maymester 2019 Sex, Gender and Society (SOCY 1016)—Online class.

**TEACHING ASSISTANT EXPERIENCE**

Spring 2021 Introduction to Sociology (SOCY 1001)

Spring 2020 Sex, Gender and Society (SOCY 1016)

Fall 2019 Gender, Genocide and Mass Trauma (SOCY 4000/WGST 4010)

Spring 2019 Introduction to Sociology (SOCY 1001)

Fall 2018 Sex, Gender and Society (SOCY 1016)

Spring 2018 Introduction to Sociology (SOCY 1001)

Fall 2017 Introduction to the Sociology of Deviance in US Society (SOCY 1004)

Spring 2017 Introduction to Sociology (101)  
Sex and Power (399)

Fall 2016 Introduction to Sociology (SOC 101)  
Religion, Gender and Sexuality (SOC 425)

- Spring 2016 Introduction to Sociology (SOC 101)  
 Sociology of Pop Culture (SOC 315)  
*Guest Lecture.* “The Sociology of Religion,” Intro to Sociology  
*Guest Lecture.* “The Role of Socialization in Genocides and Wars,” Women and  
 Genocide (SOC 399)  
*Guest Lecture.* “Grindr and the Construction of Virtual Masculinities: A Workshop,”  
 Sex and Power (SOC 451)
- Fall 2015 Sociological Theory (SOC 468)  
 Sociology of Identities (SOC 329)  
*Guest Lecture.* “Transgender 101,” Sociology of Identities (SOC 329)  
*Guest Lecture.* “Goffman and the Virtual Self: Reevaluating Dramaturgy,” Sociological  
 Theory (SOC 468)  
*Guest Lecture.* “Goffman & The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life,” Sociological  
 Theory (SOC 468)

### **AWARDS**

- 2020 Department of Sociology, Spring Research Award—\$1,400
- 2017 The Larry W. Debord Award, recognizing the outstanding student in the Sociology  
 M.A. program

### **SERVICE AND PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES**

- Fall 2020-Spring 2020 Graduate Committee. Department of Sociology. University of  
 Colorado Boulder.
- Fall 2019-Spring 2020 ARPAC Culture Committee. Department of Sociology. University  
 of Colorado Boulder.
- Sociology Graduate Student Climate Survey Committee  
 Department of Sociology. University of Colorado Boulder.
- Graduate Committee. Department of Sociology. University  
 of Colorado Boulder.
- Curation: [The Matthew C. Brown Collection](#) for Norlin Library at  
 the University of Colorado Boulder
- Curation: The Matthew C. Brown Collection for the [Department of  
 Women and Gender Studies Library](#) at the University of Colorado  
 Boulder
- Fall 2018-Spring 2019 Faculty Meeting Liaison. Department of Sociology. University of  
 Colorado Boulder.
- Sociology Graduate Student Climate Survey Committee. Department  
 of Sociology. University of Colorado Boulder.

Fall 2017-Spring 2018 Co-Chair of Sociology Graduate Student Collective. Department of Sociology. University of Colorado Boulder.

Summer 2016-Spring 2017 Founding Member and Membership and Records Coordinator for OUTGrads (Graduate LGBTQ Advocacy Organization). University of Mississippi.

Fall 2015-Spring 2017 Graduate Student Council Senator: Department of Sociology and Anthropology. University of Mississippi.

Fall 2014-Spring 2015 Student Representative on the LGBTQ Affairs Committee to the Chancellor. University of Mississippi.

Fall 2014-Spring 2015 Co-President of UM Pride Network (LGBTQ Advocacy).  
University of Mississippi.

### **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

American Sociological Association  
Southern Sociological Society  
Sociologists for Women in Society

### **REFERENCES**

#### **Amy McDowell**

University of Mississippi  
Department of Sociology  
and Anthropology  
P.O. Box 1848, University,  
MS 38677  
[mcdowell@olemiss.edu](mailto:mcdowell@olemiss.edu)  
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#### **Rachel Rinaldo**

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Department of Sociology  
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#### **Kirsten Dellinger**

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Associate Dean for  
Diversity and Inclusion  
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